

ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

Monthly Report -- Bangkok Bureau

FROM:

EXTENSION

NO.

Chief, Operations Group

DATE

December 1988

STAT

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

OFFICER'S INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

RECEIVED

FORWARDED

1.	AC/Ops	25 JAN 1989		de
2.				
3.	C/E&PS	1/25		h
4.	DD/FBIS	26 Jan		B
5.	D/FBIS			R
6.				
7.	PO/RA	1/26		om
8.	SA/CD	27 Jan		co
9.				
10.	DC IAS C/AS	2/1		2/1
11.	C/B&F/AS			AM
12.	C/PERS	2/6	2/6	22
13.	50		2/8	Att
14.	C/AG		2/4	my
15.	Exec. Reg.			

31 December 1988
FBIS-32254-88

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service
THROUGH: Chief, Operations Group
SUBJECT: Monthly Report -- Bangkok Bureau -- December 1988

I. GENERAL

A. Bangkok Bureau concluded another successful record year with publishable wordage for December amounting to 892,730, for an annual total of 9,714,030, or 660,970 higher than the previous record set last year. In line with this, the fine performances of various individuals were duly recognized with the awarding of 12 promotions and 10 QSI's over the course of 1988.

B. On the debit side, Bang Ping's two 14.5 meter satellite dishes closed out the year operating at diminished capacity as the techs continued awaiting the necessary replacement parts to make them fully operational following a devastating 23 September lightning strike.

C. The final week of the year was marred by a tragedy at the bureau building. On 27 December, an apparently deranged man was choking a woman in a washroom when building security guards arrived on the scene. Rather than surrender, the man attempted to escape, but made the mistake of jumping out a 9th floor window. Fortunately, bureau personnel were unaware of the ordeal until after it was over.

D. And finally, just when you think you've heard everything in Bangkok, the press comes up with a new wrinkle. While the usual newspaper report of a motor vehicle fatality ends with the sentence, "The driver fled the scene," a year-end report on the capsizing of a boat in which four people drowned concluded with, "The boat driver swam away from the scene."

II. OPERATIONS

A. Monitorial/Editorial

1. Along with the usual New Year greetings, the following significant events occupied the various units during the month:

A. Vietnamese Unit: The Eighth National Assembly held its Fourth Session 13-22 December, an event marked by the conspicuous absence of CPV General Secretary Nguyen Van Linh at both the opening and closing sessions. The 18,000-man last contingent of the 50,000 Vietnamese Army volunteers slated for withdrawal from Cambodia in 1988 returned to Vietnam 15-21 December.

B. Thai/Lao Unit: Thailand: Army Commander in Chief General Chawalit visited Burma 14 December and the Thai-Lao Joint Border Committee met in Bangkok 29-29 December. Laos: A mass rally was held in Vientiane 2 December to mark the 13th anniversary of the founding of the LPDR.

C. Cambodian Unit: The final phase of the seventh Vietnamese troop withdrawal took place 15-21 December, and charges and counter charges continued to be exchanged among the various Cambodian factions and Vietnam over a Cambodian settlement.

D. South Asian Unit: SAARC: The 7-member SAARC summit took place in Islamabad 29-31 December and included speeches by the Indian and Pakistan prime ministers and the adoption of an Islamabad Declaration. India: Prime Minister Gandhi paid a 5-day state visit to China 19-24 December in an apparently successful attempt to improve relations with that country. Pakistan: Newly-elected Prime Minister Bhutto formed her cabinet and Ishaq Khan was elected president for a 5-year term. Sri Lanka: Current Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa was elected president in a violence-prone election.

B. Communications

The bureau unexpectedly lost all its communications circuits and telephone lines for more than 3 hours on 25 December when the Thai telephone company replaced some cables. When asked why the bureau wasn't notified beforehand, the chief of the Embassy Communications Unit said he saw no reason to as "nobody at the Embassy works on Christmas Day." He now knows better. *Typical!*

C. Lateral Services

1. The BBC Newsroom expressed its thanks to the bureau for its "excellent and speedy handling" of two items pertaining to the Pakistani elections 12 December.

2. Aside from requests from AG and the Embassy Political and Econ sections, the bureau also received requests from Amembassy Jakarta and the Labor Counselor at the Amembassy Paris.

D. Technical

1. After waiting more than 18 months, the microwave unit that the bureau had ordered for another component finally arrived the last week of the year.

2. A new Telex machine was installed in the commo room.

E. Cruising

1. Since 21 December, Quezon City television (ABS/CBN2) in English/Tagalog has been observed on the 113E Palapa B2P satellite at RF 3980 MHz from 1100-1430 GMT in addition to the Quezon City RPN-9 evening newscast, which broadcasts on the same RF frequency from 0945-1100 GMT.

2. As of 5 December, Thai television channels 3 and 9 switched transmissions from the 60E Intelsat to the 66E Intelsat at RF's 3740 and 3772 MHz, respectively. Both TV audios are located at subcarrier 6.2 MHz.

III. ADMINISTRATION

A. Personnel

1. Bureau personnel and their families held their annual Christmas party in sunny 90 degree weather on the bureau balcony on 23 December. While all the other adults liberally partook of the international cuisine and liquid refreshments, a sweltering Santa Claus () could be heard bemoaning the fact that he couldn't even have a glass of the "Amber Liquid" as he passed out presents to the kiddies.

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2. Despite being handicapped by the chief and deputy chief, the FBIS tennis team of Mr. and Mrs. () came in second in the Class B Embassy tennis tournament and were awarded crying towels for their efforts.

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3. Cambodian Unit Chief () got a hole-in-one, his first, while playing in a major Thai tournament and was awarded a shirt for his efforts.

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4. Also on the golf course, Bureau Chief () won a local tournament and was the proud recipient of a huge silver trophy.

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Chief, Bangkok Bureau